

Kontemporari dan Berpandangan Jauh

Tom Masuk  
UNIMAS



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# Dean's greetings,

Salam Sejahtera & 1 UNIMAS greetings,

Thanks be to God on the publication of Warta Pasca 8th edition, in which we can see many changes and innovations that has been made. Although this publication is still young, but it has matured in terms of information conveyed to graduate students and external parties. That is the main objective of the publication of the Warta Pasca; to inform graduate students as well as helping UNIMAS staff to become knowledgeable, creative and informative.

The support and continuous efforts to contribute articles and knowledge sharing from the various faculties to the editor is greatly appreciated. Thanks to those who "grew up" with Warta Pasca.

On behalf of the Post Graduate Centre, we are delighted that Warta Pasca either directly or indirectly formed a new creative learning culture and in delivering information and excellent services to all.

Prof Dr Ernest Cyril De Run  
Dean

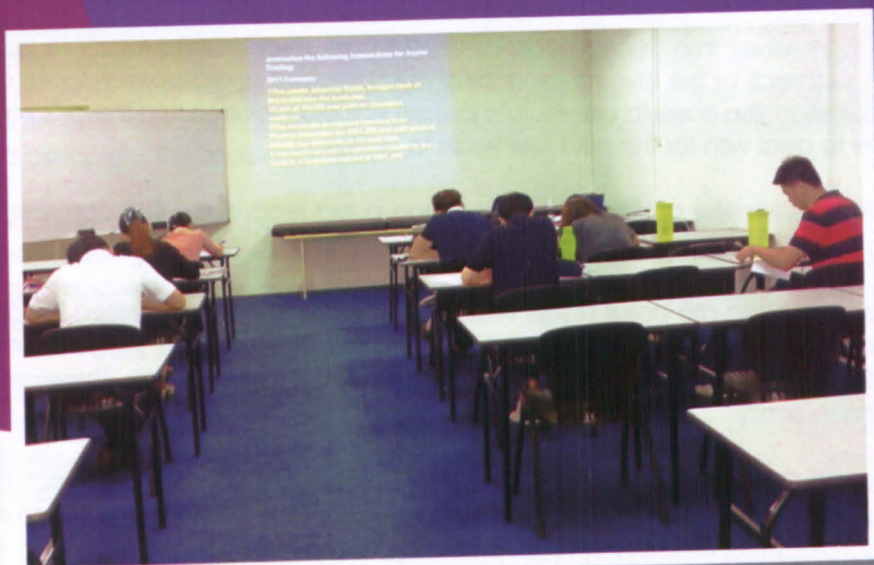
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# CMBA PROGRAMME IN SIBU



From late 2013 onwards, the CMBA programme in SibU is conducted at the Unimas Medical Faculty, Jalan Tunku Abdul Rahman, located about 10km outside the SibU town centre. The new learning centre has 3 seminar rooms and is able to cater for a greater number of students. They are outfitted with full learning facilities, and can offer a seating capacity of 30 per room.

The move to the new centre is timely as SibU students commenced joining the February 2014 intake, whereby previously, there were not enough students to warrant a February intake outside the Kota Samarahan campus. Hence, on certain weekends, there can be 3 classes (for 3 cohorts) running simultaneously at the CMBA SibU Learning Centre.



# MPH Student's Life

Diana Jawa  
MPH Student

*Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, UNIMAS*

The discipline of public health is critical in uplifting social justice and fairness for all, with its focus on the collective actions of every level of the society to empower the community. Public health has been something very close to my heart. I am certain this could be the best platform for me to promote health and wellbeing, to prevent disease and disability and to foster resilience and adaptation.

One should have interest before indulging themselves into public health. I used to ask myself, am I ready to be a detective to find the source of an epidemic outbreak or the love for crunching numbers that could possibly point out to a direction? Well, it is the utmost relevant question you have to ask yourself before enrolling yourself into the program. In other words, a new aspect of life you have to deal with for the next few years to come.

I have been working for the past 6 years with the Ministry of Health, before taking a big leap in my life, considering whether I should pursue my studies.

The life of a post graduate student and undergraduate are poles apart. Post graduate programs are geared towards adult learning, leaving us to manage our time appropriately. As an adult, I am sure we have to juggle diverse responsibilities in order to comfort our friends, immediate family and of course our long academic hours. Therefore, it is essential to manage the workload to maintain sanity.

No more "spoon feeding". Different lectures have different approach. Some lectures provide hand outs, which are sufficient enough while others required you to master the whole textbook by yourself! In other case, students do the major bulk of the presentations while the lecturer supervises the content that has been presented. In addition to the course works and lectures, the fundamental component of the master program is the dissertation. A well written postgraduate thesis, with a relevant topic, could be the deal maker, potentially placing you in respectable journals. When you get to the dissertation stage, you face a significant shift in the structure of your educational environment. Unless you recognize how that environment has changed and understand what new competencies are being asked from you, you may get stuck. My advice, stay focus and follow the timeline.

Some of you may be thinking that exam days are over, and that's deceiving. Exams exist throughout our life. "When will this misery end?" I have never been so busy doing my laundry and gym just to avoid studying!





## “The life of a post graduate student and undergraduate are poles apart.”

We can't run from certain responsibilities. Therefore it's best to comply with the situation accordingly. In my opinion, a master student should always be curious about everything by posing questions to generate preliminary ideas. We must be able to stay focus and increase our attention time span. In order to succeed this hectic program, it is important to have good time management, competence, energetic, self-awareness, responsibility, willingness to take the risk, courageous, and self-direction. Another important advice that I would like to share is, study smart and don't let the grades affect you. Grading makes a master student neither depressed nor euphoric, since the ultimate goal is to pass and complete the master program.

In addition to this, good working relationship and teamwork with your fellow classmates and lecturers makes the fighting more worthwhile. At the end of the day, you will always have someone there to back you up when you are down, and laugh along with you when you succeed, and for that I am grateful for the wonderful classmates I have during my MPH class year 2012/2013!

The spirit of being a Master student is in all of us. By nature, human beings are learning machines. We have an innate ability to learn, and all of us have room to grow and improve. Unfortunately, people also learn to hide that ability. As they experience the pain associated with learning, they shut down. Never give up in what you believe in, as long as there is hope there is always a way....

“I mustered up my courage and completed my masters.....I am sure you can do it...”





# What constitute good supervision?

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Edmund Ui-Hang SIM  
Head, Lifelong Learning Unit,  
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Very often, when a potential graduate student chooses a prospective supervisor, field of expertise and expert status are not among the top criteria considered by the former. This is based on my personal observation and experience. In fact, very few applicants of postgraduate studies look at academic reputation or research profile of the person they want as a supervisor. Instead, students prefer to check on factors such as popularity status and personal attributes. For instance, whether the lecturer has lots of students and what are the opinions of generosity. Among this could also be odd students who even consider gender of supervisor as a major determinant.

Only the more informed and resourceful ones might make their decision after analysing institutional website information for possible alignment of study/research interest between student and supervisor. This group is usually rare. It is even more unusual to find applicants of postgraduate studies who actually review the publication track records and H-index of academics in making decision on their choice of supervisors. A reason to this could be that many students are unfamiliar with the importance of research track record, thus are also oblivious to implication of publication metrics data such as H-index, Cumulative Impact Factor, or citation frequency.

Still, many potential postgraduate students yearn for a good supervisor, albeit limiting their consideration based on trivial criteria. Many a time also, faculty committees associated with the task of pairing applicant students with academics provide assistance of limited value in this matter. The common practice is to circulate the applicant's proposal among academics to see who is interested to take it further. This may not be a good method. Unsurprisingly, a majority of us believe that there is no universal strategy that can be used by students to select good postgraduate supervisors, or for faculty postgraduate committees to pair students with suitable supervisors. Scholars on this subject matter might even argue that the concept of good supervision is a hypothetical construct. As such, an ideal supervisor (or supervision) does not exist, and different students benefit under differing forms of supervision. It is, after all, a matter that can be largely shaped by the subjective nature of personality matching between supervisor and supervisee. So, an objective form of measuring student-supervisor compatibility is unrealistic.

I know of someone who had a strict supervisor and wished he could have worked under the guidance of one who is more lenient and less demanding. He hankered for the day that his supervisor would leave him alone or not pressure him much. On the other hand, there was also a person I knew who complained that her supervisor was too relaxed about her progress and left her to conduct her research on her own. She was envious of those who had supervisors that gave regular close attention. To choose between a demanding and an easy-going supervisor, she would have opted for the former, at that time. In both cases, the students initially chose their respective supervisors based on study interest, or at least on relevance to discipline of studies. It was the incompatibility between personalities that soured an otherwise warm relationship.

A naïve way of looking at this would be to reason that good supervision comes from a balance attitude between sternness and leniency. For this to happen, a supervisor may strive towards being firm on some occasions but open-minded in other situations. However, shifting between personalities is not a natural behaviour for anyone to work on. A demanding supervisor concomitantly has a persona that is aligned with an unbending austerity in work habits. He or she may not be able to adjust accordingly to suit the learning styles and paces of inept students. Postgraduate supervision is a different ball game from classroom lecture.



Expectedly also, a strict supervisor is often a high achiever – a characteristic that is top amongst the reasons many students choose him/her in the first place. At the outset, many students assumed that it is good for them to be pressured, only to realise that they could not cope with the stress in the long run. On the other hand, an easy-going supervisor may not necessarily be an under-achiever, but could be perceived by students as impartial to their progress and unconcerned about their problems. Notably so, when students prefer to be closely monitored and guided in their studies nowadays.

Academics trained in the old school ways maintained that graduate students have to adapt to the personalities and supervision styles of their supervisors because they are the main benefactors of the process. It is not the supervisors who have to adjust to their students, but the other way around. While this notion still governs the nature of supervision today, unlike those from Generation X, millennial students are neither cowed by a supervisor-centred (top-down) mode of training nor subscribe obediently to a regimented style of apprentice moulding. The dilemma here is that a majority of supervisors are of the age group of Generation X and above while most students belong to the Y or Millennial Generation. How then, could academic administrators or faculty authorities prescribe good supervision?

To me, the biggest misunderstood tenet regarding postgraduate supervision is that it is a function of educational instruction rather than academic influence. Many students expect to be taught on every aspect of postgraduate pursuit from literature search and interpretation, and investigative methodology to the writing of their thesis. Compounding this problem is the existence of academics who believe that quality supervision constitutes the direct teaching of these items. It could be because they were taught this way before, and it worked for them. Although explicit facilitation may have some success stories, it is a taxing responsibility unsuited for today's academics. A good supervisor should instead facilitate learning by inspiring his/her student to be interested learners.

The one greatest thing that I have learned from my supervisor is the appreciation of science. I never had to be overtly taught how to read molecular biology or undertake complex experiments. These come naturally when I embarked passionately on the pursuit of research, and from observing senior students and postdoctoral research fellows. I always admired how my supervisor explained her research findings and argued the conjecture thereof. There was never a dull moment when she enlightened peers and students on the intricate pathways of molecular interaction. It is my assertion till today that I never knew the wonders of science until I studied under her. The academic experience gained from her research mentorship is the biggest factor that propelled me to love molecular biology and to take up its study as a career. Of equal importance is her tenacity in academic integrity that has been the guiding force in my resolute adherence to professionalism at work. Her personal stand on quality research engenders in me an inclination to publish well. Finally, it was her eminent research and academic leadership that exacted the best form of supervision.

In my opinion, postgraduate studies are intellectual pursuits that cannot be a mode of erudition characterised by narrow instructional process. There should be an emphasis on inspired learning and self-enthused behavioural change. The quest for knowledge, the curiosity to unravel, and the fascination with discovering should be internalised by learners. Supervisors should complement this by instigating expertise status and observing professional attitude. While good supervision may remain a theoretical assumption, a successful postgraduate pursuit is realised in efficacious partnership between supervisors and students. Like a marriage, good supervision constitutes good partnership.



# H-index and Impact Factor: What do these mean?

By Assoc Prof Dr Edmund U.H. Sim

Do you know what h-index is? What about Impact Factor? Do you know what they mean?

Some of my colleagues refer to h-index as Harzing Index because it can be calculated using the online software, the Harzing's Publish or Perish programme. Is this correct? Others joked about it as either the "Happy Index" or "Horrible Index" depending how it affects them. If a survey is done in any local university today, I think the ignorance on h-index among academics and graduate students may be quite shocking. I once had a conversation with a senior professor regarding H-index, and he admitted to his lack of knowledge on the subject. This colleague publishes well and in highly reputable journals. Yet, he is not aware of his h-index, where he can find it, and what it means for his publications. This scenario is not uncommon. Although h-index is not something new, the culture of qualifying our publishing reputation against our peers is a taboo subject in many local universities.

To educate myself on this, I did a quick search via Wikipedia<sup>1</sup>, and the explanation below is what I can gather. I stand corrected on many of the facts, but I think it may shed some light about the mysterious h-index.

Thought of by a theoretical physicist, Jorge E. Hirsch, h-index is a way of measuring the quality of the work published by researchers. Incidentally, h-index is actually Hirsch index (Sorry to those "Harzing's fans". This time, you are not so correct), and focuses on the aspects of productivity and impact of published work by a researcher. It measures these by taking into consideration a researcher's most cited papers and the frequency (or number) of citations from the publications of that researcher. What this means is simply that if a researcher's h-index is 5, he/she has published 5 papers of which each have been cited not less than 5 times. The superiority of applying h-index measurement to the quality of published work by a researcher is that it is more than just simple cumulative counting of citation or quantity of publication, and it is not biased by influence of journals with high Impact Factor. If you are quite lost about Impact Factor, do not fret. I will deal with it in later section. In calculating h-index, one need not apply complex mathematical formula. Besides the Harzing's Publish or Perish programme, the Google Scholar Citation platform can easily provide (automatically calculate) one with his/her h-index. This article will not deal with how to use these tools/platforms, but suffice for me to say that they are easily available, free, and very user friendly.

If assessing our h-index is so simple, why are many scholars still not well-informed about it? For one thing, there may be certain sensitivity among scholars to compare their h-index. For some academics, this index can be a boon to their career while among others, it can be a bane. There are also those who refuse to learn about it because Ignorance is bliss. If university management uses h-index as a criterion for career advancement it will trigger ire and awe among the academic community. If potential graduate students use h-index to guide their choice of prospective supervisors, this may lead to the wrong kind of envy and competition among academics. Nonetheless, when used correctly it can be a reliable tool to encourage quality research among academics and graduate students. Having said this, the caveat to h-index is that one has to take into account the disparate culture of citation among different fields/disciplines of knowledge. Hence, it is only relevant when used to compare quality of published work among peers in the same field. Interestingly, this precautionary consideration is similar for another type of quality measurement of publication, the Impact Factor.

I do not how many times I have heard from colleagues that there is no journal with Impact Factor for their field. For simplicity sake, we shall use IF for Impact Factor from henceforth. In fact, at one time, when asked about IF, a colleague posed a counter question of, "What exactly is IF?" However, before we proceed with its definition, a quick check on various online journal resources revealed the interesting facts listed in Table 1. It should be noted that this list is well below that of an exhausted list and represent a very limited sample from the vast academic journal resources out there in the world. Nevertheless, I have tried to include as extensive as possible a listing relevant to most fields from various faculties of a typical local university.



Table 1. Impact factors of selected journals from various disciplines. Unless otherwise stated, the Impact Factor is based on 2011 Journal Citation Report of Thomson Reuters. A majority of the data above is from the SAGE2, Annual Reviews3 and Elsevier4 publisher websites.

Name of Journal	Impact Factor
<b>Social Sciences</b>	
Journal of Anthropological Archaeology	1.508
Anthropological Theory	0.521
Annual Review of Anthropology	2.553
Language In Society	1.189
Language and Communication	0.667
Second Language Research	1.219
Journal of Contemporary History	0.242
The Social Science Journal	0.358
International Social Work	0.478
Research on Social Work Practice	1.532
Annual Review of Political Science	1.706
Qualitative Research	1.426
Politics and Society	2.118
Gender and Society	2.414
American Sociological Review	4.422
Journal of Service Research	2.732
Administrative Science Quarterly	4.212
Television and New Media	0.219
Visual Communication	0.447
<b>Economics &amp; Business Management</b>	
Journal of Management	4.595
Family Business Review	2.600
Annual Review of Resource Economics	1.742
Annual Review of Financial Economics	0.690
Journal of Business Economics and Management	2.388
<b>Cognitive Science, Education &amp; Counselling</b>	
Review of Educational Research	3.169
Higher Education	1.061
Teaching In Higher Education	0.757
Journal of Diversity In Higher Education	0.683
Adult Education Quarterly	0.189
Cognitive Science	2.376
Cognition: International Journal of Cognitive Science	3.162
Patient Education and Counselling	2.305
Journal of Counselling Psychology	3.228
<b>Creative and Applied Arts</b>	
Journal of Vibration and Control	1.000
Computer Music Journal	1.588
Journal of New Music Research	0.755
Music Perception	1.742
Applied Acoustics	1.050
Research In Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance	0.353
<b>Pure and Applied Sciences</b>	
Statistical Modelling	0.895
IMA Journal of Applied Mathematics	0.776
Textile Research Journal	1.122
Waste Management and Research	1.193
Water Research	4.865
Journal of Environmental Management	3.245
Environmental Engineering and Management Journal	1.004
Environment and Resources	6.419
Environmental Science and Technology	5.228
Journal of Biodiversity and Environmental Sciences	0.021
Biodiversity and Conservation	2.238
Plant Systematic and Evolution	1.335
Zoology	1.500
Journal of Zoology	2.043
Systematic Entomology	2.943
Aquaculture	2.041
Aquaculture Research	1.203
Journal of Plankton Research	2.079
Journal of Molecular Microbiology and Biotechnology	1.953



World Journal of Microbiology and Biotechnology	1.532
Journal of Integrative Plant Biology	2.543
Annual Review of Analytical Chemistry	9.048
The Plant Biotechnology Journal	5.442
The Plant Cell	10.224
Annual Review of Entomology	11.455
Annual Review of Ecology, Evolution and Systematics	14.373
Annual Review of Marine Science	16.457
Annual Review of Genetics	22.233
Annual Review of Plant Biology	25.962
Science	31.201 (2012)
Cell	32.403
Annual Review of Biochemistry	34.317
Nature	36.101
<b>Nursing and Public Health</b>	
Asia Pacific Journal of Public Health	1.056
Research in Nursing and Health	1.708
International Journal of Nursing Studies	2.178
Nursing Research	1.402
<b>Information Technology and Computer Science</b>	
Journal of Information Science	1.299
Journal of Information Technology	2.321
Microprocessors and Microsystems	0.575
<b>Engineering</b>	
International Journal of Engineering Science	1.210
Acta Mechanica Solida Sinica	0.766
Applied Thermal Engineering	2.064
International Journal of Mechanical Sciences	1.231
Chemical Engineering Journal	3.461
Journal of Electrostatics	1.080
Microelectronic Engineering	1.557
KSCE Journal of Civil Engineering	0.377
<b>Medicine</b>	
Oncology: International Journal for Cancer Research and Treatment	2.267
Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention	4.123
Oncogene	6.373
Cancer Research	7.856
The Journal of Clinical Investigation	13.069
Journal of Clinical Oncology	18.372
The Lancet	38.278
Annual Review of Immunology	52.761
New England Journal of Medicine	53.298 (2012)
CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians	101.78 (2012)

Despite the popular opinion that IF do not exist for the disciplines in the arts and humanities, the table above provide evidence to the contrary. However, it is quite clear that IFs for journals of the arts and humanities are relatively lower than that of the sciences, medicine and engineering. To understand the difference, we need to know how journal IF are calculated, and why it exists.

Journal IF was created by Dr Eugene Garfield (founder of the Institute of Scientific Information, ISI; now known as Thomson Reuters) and Irving Sher in the mid-70s with the purpose of providing a quantitative metric to compare and rank journals<sup>5</sup>. To obtain a two-year IF of a particular journal, the calculation is based on adding the numbers of

$$\text{IF of Journal A in 2013} = \frac{\text{No. of citation from articles in Journal A for 2010 \& 2011}}{\text{No. of articles in Journal A for 2010 \& 2011}}$$



citation from articles published by that journal in the preceding two years, and dividing it with the number of articles from that journal in the same two years. An illustration of this very simple calculation is provided below.

Therefore, if the total citations from articles of Journal A in 2010 and 2011 is 1000, and the number of articles published in the two years is 500, the IF of Journal A is 2. Another way of looking at IF is to consider it as an objective measurement of a journal's citation rate<sup>5</sup>. Some may say that it is a measure of a journal's influence<sup>6</sup>. Unfortunately, many academics who are not familiar with its definition and purpose perceived IF as an unfair discriminatory metric for evaluating publication quality. This has led to a myriad of rationales from various sector of academia to counter its usefulness. Popular criticisms of its validity include the belief that it is a "numbers' game" and is frequently subjected to manipulation; that it favours high profile researchers from reputable universities in the Western hemisphere; that it is meant for those who publish in the areas of bioscience and medicine; and it is irrelevant for those of the arts and humanities.

To prove that it is not a "numbers' game", I used an example from the citation rates of one of my publication to explain. In 2002, my collaborators and I have a paper accepted and published in the *Oncogene* journal. The 2011 IF of this journal is 6.373. This means that a paper in this journal will be cited on average 6.4 times every year. To check whether my paper conforms to this citation rate, I tracked how many times it is cited for each year from 2003 to 2012. The result of this simple analysis is shown in the Table 2.

Since the expected yearly citation number (based on the journal's IF) is comparable to the actual result (6.4 compared to 6.7), clearly, IF is a good predictor of citation pattern. Most importantly, it dispels the idea of IF being a "numbers' game". This also means that publishing one's work in journals with IF does carry measurable certainty that the paper will be read and the findings cited. Ultimately, this is what academics and researchers aimed for, that their work is of use to their peers.

Table 2. Analysis of citation patterns from my publication in *Oncogene*

Year	No. of citations	
2003	7	
2004	6	<b>Average citation per year over a ten years period</b> <b>= total citation ÷ 10 years</b> <b>= 67 ÷ 10</b> <b>= 6.7</b>
2005	6	
2006	8	
2007	6	
2008	7	
2009	8	
2010	6	
2011	7	
2012	6	

The example from my case (mentioned above) also disproves the notion of IF being only relevant for academics from Western developed countries. If this notion is true, I would never succeed in publishing in any IF journals. In fact, throughout 2003 till 2013, I have published in several journals with IF. Many of my colleagues have done likewise, and a senior professor in my institution has published a few research articles in *The Lancet Infectious Diseases* (IF = 17.391).

Finally, in my opinion, those who maintain that IF metric is not relevant for those of the arts and humanity disciplines are those who do not publish well, but place the blame on IF. Table 1 provides more than enough evidence that IF exists for many journals in the arts and humanities albeit of different top values compared to those in the hard sciences.



However, since citation patterns and kinetics for the soft sciences differ from those of hard sciences, comparison of journal ranking via IF must be taken in context<sup>5,6,7</sup>. The comparative validity is only relevant when comparing among journals within a specific discipline, and sometimes within a particular sub-discipline<sup>7</sup>. In addition, for some researchers, even the link between the actual quality of research findings and journal IF is still debatable due to technical and conceptual faults of this form of measurement system<sup>7,8</sup>. However, to totally discard it as one of the quality metrics for valuating published findings is also an unreasonable attitude. Impact Factor is still important for the ranking of journals thus a reliable guide for librarians when making selective choices on journal subscription, and for researchers to decide on which journals to submit their manuscripts.

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# 8th Pidato Antarabangsa Bahasa Melayu (PABM)



I had the chance to participate and to represent my country, Senegal to the 8th Pidato Antarabangsa Bahasa Melayu (PABM). This is an international Malay language speaking competition coordinated by the office of the Prime Minister of Malaysia. The competition took place at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) from 19 to 29 April 2014. For this year's competition, 70 participants from 70 different countries had competed.

All the participants took part in a home stay program for 3 nights at Felda Sg. Tenggi, Hulu Selangor. The competition offered 3 prizes: US\$7,000 for the winner, US\$5,000 for the second and US\$3,000 for the third place. On top of that, all the contestants received RM 1,000 and gifts from the Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Education and other sponsors.

As a representative of UNIMAS and Senegal, I went until the quarter finals. The winner of this PABM 2014 is from Australia, Second winner from China and the third from Yemen.



I would like to thank the Malaysian Government and all the sponsors for giving me such a great opportunity to meet and make more than 70 new friends from over 70 countries. The event was unique and full of experiences. I had visited several attractions in Kuala Lumpur such as KL Tower, Istana Negara, Putrajaya and KLCC. Also, during this 10 day-event, I had met many MPs, Ministers and other authorities of this country. Finally, we were blessed to be invited at Seri Perdana, The Prime Minister's residence and to have breakfast with the First Lady, Datin Seri Paduka Rosmah Mansor: who would have thought?



# Datuk and Datuk Seri in Academia

By Associate Professor Dr Ting Su Hie

In Malaysian society, Datuk and Datuk Seri are honorary titles conferred to individuals who are prominent in society in various aspects of public contribution. In academia, Associate Professor and Professor are academic titles conferred by universities in recognition of the individuals' national and international reputation as scholars in their field (e.g., Boston University; Michigan University). "While teaching and research are still major platforms on which professorships are awarded, at some universities an individual can win promotion to the rank of professor based primarily on their service or knowledge transfer record or on professional experience judged equivalent to outstanding academic contribution" (University of Melbourne). A study was conducted to determine whether the meanings of these academic titles are obvious to university students.

In an open-ended questionnaire, university students were asked "What do the title 'Associate Professor' and 'Professor' mean to you? What qualities should they have?" The questions were posed in both English and Bahasa Melayu, and the responses could be given in either language. The students could write down any number of qualities – most wrote one or two but did not exceed four. The results from the survey of 139 students from various disciplines are very telling of the university environment and the practice of conferring these academic titles. Do the university students know that a Professor has a higher academic rank than an Associate Professor? Only 22.3% of 139 students got it right. In fact, 32.4% understood it the other way around and thought that Associate Professors have higher educational qualifications, better research profile and are more knowledgeable than Professors! Some also felt that Associate Professors teach better than Professors. To use the analogy of honorary titles in Malaysian society, it seems that Associate Professors are the Datuk Seris and the Professors are the Datuks. The remaining students surveyed either felt that Associate Professors and Professors are the same (18.7%) or did not know the difference (26.6%).

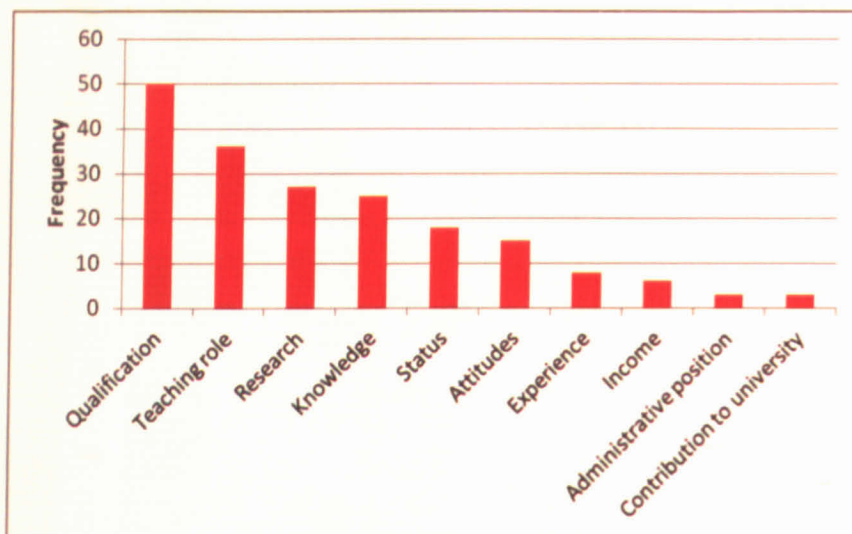


Figure 1. Defining criteria that differentiates Associate Professor from Professor

What are the defining criteria of Associate Professor and Professor for university students? The top ranking criterion is qualification or educational level, PhD in particular (Figure 1). Some students had vague ideas that qualification is what differentiates Associate Professor and Professor but were unable to state the difference but others defined an Associate Professor or a Professor as one with a PhD, for example, "Lecturers have master, AP and P have PhD". Quite many understood it wrongly, giving responses such as "Lecturer, degree and master. Professor, PhD. Profesor Madya, second level in PhD" and "Profesor Madya has PhD and Dr and Profesor has PhD." These students did not know that a PhD qualification entitles the individual to be addressed as "Dr", and mistakenly viewed PhD and Dr as two stages in academic rank. While Associate Professors and Professors usually have PhDs, it is not a defining criterion that differentiates the two because these academic titles are recognition of the extent of their research contribution in academia.

After qualification, the next three defining criteria of Associate Professor and Professor are teaching role, research work and knowledge level. To the students, Associate Professor and Professor teach differently. Some were in favour of Associate Professors (e.g., "Associate Professor is more experienced and intellectual than a professor") but others felt that Professors teach better:



Professor is more experienced than Associate Professor. Professor is more knowledgeable and [I] get to know the main points during lectures compared to Associate Professor. Professors have their own unique way to motivate students and they are more effective than what Associate Professors say.

As students are in the university to learn, the manner in which lecturers handle their teaching responsibilities is what catches the students' attention. Related to this is their view of Associate Professors and Professors as people who profess knowledge. While some mention knowledge in general, others expected the Associate Professors and Professors to be "knowledgeable in their field". This reiterates the idea that lecturers should incorporate their research in their teaching. Some felt that Professors were more knowledgeable than Associate Professors but there were, in fact, more who felt the other way around. These messages are a wake-up call because as we move in and out of the lecture halls and as we talk with students in our office and corridors, students are watching every step we take and listening to every word we utter. From these, they make judgements on the worth of lecturers, and those who hold the titles of "Associate Professor" and "Professor" are being scrutinised on whether they live up to the academic titles.

Altogether 27 students defined Associate Professors and Professors in terms of research and recognition given to them for their research work:

*"Profesor Madya seorang profesor yang baru mendapat gelaran kerana telah berjaya membuat kajian sendiri tetapi Profesor ialah orang yang telah banyak melakukan penyelidikan dan berpengalaman."*

Associate Professor is a professor who has just got the title because he/she succeeded in doing their own research but a Professor is someone who has done a lot of research and is experienced."

These students' ideas of academic titles match those held in academia. These students are somehow aware that lecturers who do research are recognised for their research impact and are given these academic titles by the university. However, the students were divided in their views on whether it is the Associate Professors or the Professors who have more research impact. To some students, Associate Professors have a better research profile, for example, "Associate Professor has higher education and research compare to Professor". The Professors should be more renown in their field and their university. Are the students wrong? Are they basing their comments on a few individuals? The students surveyed were from Years 1 to 3 in their degree – some have met only a few lecturers, others have met a large number of lecturers. Perceptions begin with observations of actual events and phenomena. From many observations over time, hypothesis is formed from emerging patterns. These hypotheses are constantly being tested as more cases come into view. Eventually perceptions are formed and colour subsequent views.



The students' understanding of Associate Professor and Professor titles have deviated from conventional meaning of these academic titles. This suggests that the conferment of academic titles in the university may not have research and knowledge contribution as the core but the titles may be given based on considerations unknown to students and not within the usual context of academia. Perhaps the consideration of the university is towards service contribution, like how Datuk and Datuk Seri are conferred in Malaysian society. To end, I would like to cite the University of Melbourne report of the policies, conventions and practices among Australian higher education providers:

To avoid possible confusion and for the purposes of understanding and clarity ... it is important that individual institutions design their career structures with reference to other systems. The use of academic titles in public universities is founded upon both long-standing history and tradition, not to mention well-established policy and procedures.

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# Postgraduate Lunch Hour Talk Programme of the Faculty of Economics and Business

Since July 2013, Faculty of Economics and Business has launched a new programme of postgraduate lunch hour talk programme except its staff faculty lunch hour talk programme initially facilitating. The postgraduate lunch hour talk programme is organised to build up a close relationship between FEB and postgraduate students (PhD/MSC by research) by helping them in enhancing their learning skills and research abilities; and to assist their right paths on the roadmap for their postgraduate journey to embark in time. Postgraduate lunch hour talks are aimed to facilitate as per student requests to be tailored their requirements; the themes of talks are flexible to comply with the students' requests. The scheduled of lunch hour talk is every last Wednesday of a month from 2:30pm – 4:30pm. Additionally, if there is no request from the students for the scheduled period, students will be invited to join faculty seminars conducted by the academic staff of FEB at faculty lunch hour talks.





These activities provide postgraduate students much more opportunities to progress their research skills. Two academic staffs are assigned to organise the postgraduate lunch hour talks,

Postgraduate students can contact with either Dr. Daw Tin Hla (thdaw@feb.unimas.my) or Dr. Muhd Khalique Muhd Sadiq (mohamadkhalique@feb.unimas.my) for their individual requests to have a lunch hour talk, for being either as a presenter or as a learner/discussant for a particular interested topic.

Oversea students are allowed to send his/her video clip to the above mentioned email if they would like to present at a particular postgraduate lunch hour talk. The responds and suggestions from audience will be emailed back to the students via the above mentioned emails. Previous postgraduate lunch hour talks delivered the topic on multiple regression data analysis, time series analysis, research design and DataStream operation.



Postgraduate students participated in the lunch hour talk recently held on 7 March 2014. Some academic staff attended and took part the leading role of asking questions and discussions; the post graduate students asked some questions and answered by the presenters.

The students could have much more chances to well-define their ambiguities; could share and listen different experiences in research among peers and experienced researchers. Postgraduate students are warmly welcome to request for facilitating lunch hour talk or to attend lunch hour talks regarding research practice.

Dr Daw Tin Hla  
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# International Post Graduate Intercollegiate Basic Surgical Skill Course At the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, UNIMAS

Professor Dr Khin Tun

MBBS, MMedSc(Surgery), FRCS(Edin), FICS(Uro), MMAMS  
Head, Department of Surgery

Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, UNIMAS

The department of Surgery of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, UNIMAS has been active in coordinating and organizing Post Graduate International events for many years and we have successfully conducted the International Post Graduate Examination in Surgery MRCS ( Membership of the Royal College of Surgeons) examination in collaboration with the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh ,U K annually.

Commencing from 2013 , the department of surgery of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, UNIMAS has hosted and conducted the International Post Graduate Intercollegiate Basic Surgical Skill Course at the Clinical Skill Laboratory of the Faculty in collaboration with the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland, U K.

This is a three day intensive course covering basic surgical techniques like handling of instruments , suturing techniques, bowel anastomosis , basic vascular surgical techniques and basic minimal access or laparoscopic surgery. Only 16 participants are accepted each year as the course is a practical hands on training.

Professor Dr Khin Tun, head of the department of surgery, FMHS, UNIMAS is the course convener and the lecturers of the department of surgery , FMHS, UNIMAS and the surgeons from the department of surgery of Sarawak General Hospital participated as a team of facilitators for the course. The official representative from the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland also took part in the course.

The participants are from east and west of Malaysia and also from other countries like Australia and New Zealand. The course materials are provided by the kind contribution from the Johnson and Johnson Malaysia Sdn Bhd , Karl Storz Endoscope Company and Medilife Malaysia Sdn Bhd.

This course is one of the mandatory requirements for the young surgical trainees to be awarded the Certificate of Completion of Basic Surgical Training CCBST and in fact it is an Intercollegiate Basic Surgical Skill Course endorsed by the four Royal Surgical Colleges of United Kingdom namely the Royal College of Surgeons of England , Edinburgh , Glasgow and Ireland. The certificates are awarded to the successful participants by the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland.

With the blessing, encouragement ,support and advice from UNIMAS and Faculty's administration, we have been successful in organizing post graduate international events of high reputation bringing up the image and the prestige of UNIMAS in the international arena of surgical training and education. The success reflects the team work and team spirit of all the members and the staff of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences of UNIMAS.



# FACULTY POSTGRADUATE COLLOQUIUM: A PLATFORM FOR SHARING KNOWLEDGE AND MONITORING

Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts (FACA) has conducted Postgraduate Colloquium Series since 2007 with aim to enhance the faculty postgraduate students with added skills required in completing their studies. This colloquium was planned and carried out at the end of each postgraduate academic semester. Faculty has made it mandatory for students who are still in the minimum period of their studies. However, students who exceed the minimum period are also encouraged to participate in the colloquium. In the last colloquium series (semester 1 2013/2014), a total of 30 students have made their presentations.



After a series of past colloquiums, improvements have been made in making this colloquium more established. The colloquiums are in conference format and students are given 15-minute to present the results of their research achieved during the current semester. The implementation of this colloquium is jointly organised by the faculty postgraduate student committee, where all the activities during the colloquium run by students.

The colloquium aimed to enhance social and presentation skills among the students, while offering a platform for them to exchange and discuss recent information, knowledge and experiences on the current developments of their on-going research activities. For new graduate students, the colloquium also be a platform to present their research proposals to be carried out. It helps provide meaningful input in their proposed research. Besides that, the

colloquium is intended to monitor the progress of postgraduate students. Through this students will always consistent in doing their research methodology and strategy that has been outlined.

The Faculty Postgraduate Colloquium had served its purpose of being the platform where postgraduate students of the Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts are given an opportunity to present and share the results of their research, to gain knowledge and skills sharing, and finally to build confidence among students.





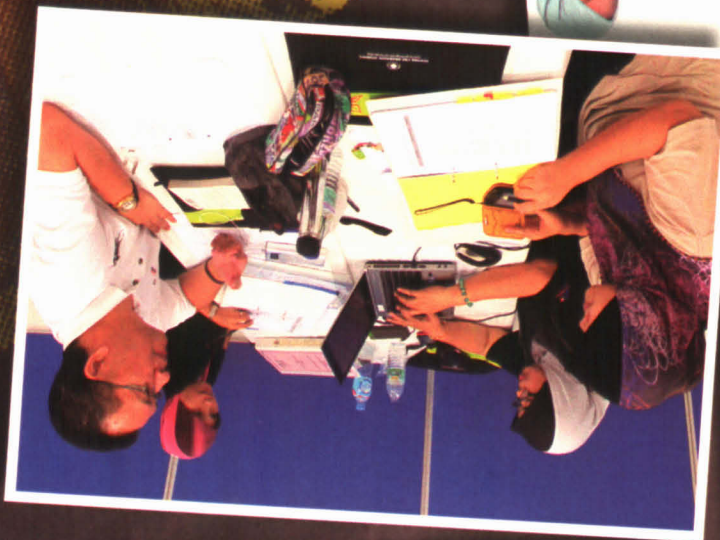
# *Farewell* to Mr Azlan Ramli



# *Welcome* to Mdm Hadijah Hj Morni



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